Rs.9.5 crores, which is proposed to be implemented. Under this programme, all the 25 Regional Cancer Centres will be linked with four secondary level hospitals each in their respective regions, so as to offer tele-consultation.

It is also proposed to network all the nine telemedicine centers in North East and offer teleconsultation to hospitals in remote locations in North East.

Tele-communication services are intended to reduce patient costs and to offer them free in Government hospitals for BPL families.

Budgetary provisions for the next year will be finalized towards the end of the year depending upon projects identified for implementation.

Ill-effects of improper medicines

†*331. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that millions of people in our country are affected every year by taking improper medicines;

(b) whether the Heart Care Foundation of India has also drawn the attention of Government in this regard in one of its reports; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMDOSS): (a) to (c) As per information available, the Heart Care Foundation of India in one of its reports published in the bulletin of Delhi Medical Association has reported that millions of people in the country are affected every year due to use of improper medicines. However, a copy of the report was not submitted to Government of India by the Heart Care Foundation of India.

In its report, the Heart Care Foundation has primarily reported about the adverse reactions and deaths due to improper use of drugs and lack of proper precautionary measures in hospital care etc. It has been, further, stated that 80% of adverse drug reactions are related to medical prescriptions and medical errors due to look alike drugs etc.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

The Heart Care Foundation has recommended to make e-prescription compulsory and to ensure that every practitioner has one associated health care worker who has basic knowledge in drug prescription, health and dietary counseling.

As far as the issue concerning 'look alike' drugs are concerned, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has already advised all State Drug Licensing Authorities to ensure that the brand names of drug formulations approved by them should not look alike with existing brand names.

A National Pharmacovigilance Programme is also under implementation in this country for collecting data with respect to adverse drug reaction in the country so as to ensure that suitable measures are taken to rectify any such situation, if it arises.

Plantation of Eucalyptus tree

*332. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Eucalyptus (Safaida) tree sucks a larger quantity of underground water than Neem, Peepal or Banyan trees in the country and most particularly in Northern India;

(b) if so, whether due to plantation of this tree, the ground-water level has gone down;

(c) whether Government propose to ban the plantation of this tree and allow plantation of local trees; and

(d) if so, by when such necessary instructions are expected to be issued to the State Governments and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Research information on consumption of water by Eucalyptus tree *vis a vis* Neem, Peepal or Banyan tree is not available. However, consumption of water per unit production of Biomass in respect of Eucalyptus is lower compared to many species.

(b) There is no conclusive evidence to this effect.

(c) There is no proposal to ban the plantation of Eucalyptus trees.

(d) Question does not arise.